Positioning of Low E Glass

Low emissivity glass is used in nearly all of the units we make and is there to enhance the thermal insulation of insulating units. It achieves this by being positioned in the unit with the coating on a surface facing the cavity.

In an insulating glass unit, counting the surfaces from the exterior of the building, the Low E coating should therefore be on surface 3 (the cavity surface of the inner pane) or surface 2 (the cavity surface of the outer pane) if the other position is not available.

Most Low E glasses give their U-Values equally well whether positioned on surface 2 or surface 3, although to reduce optical effects and purely for standardisation the general advice is that the preferred location of the Low coating is on surface 3 of the unit, ie the inside of the inner pane.

Certain other glass types however also have the inner pane as their favoured location, and hence when used in conjunction with Low E glass we need to decide which takes priority, considering all factors.

Texture Glass for example, to avoid build-up of dirt or moss within the pattern is usually specified to the internal pane and in this example, it would be normal and acceptable to fit the Low E glass to the external pane, with the coating in the cavity on face 2.

The U value remains unchanged any slight optical effects will be masked by the presence of the obscured pane.

Clayton obscure glass units are labelled up to reflect this advice, although if aesthetic or other reasons are at play, the unit may be glazed either way without impact on thermal performance.